Evidence Submission

1. Background

The Drug Analysis Laboratory identifies unknown substances for local, state, and federal agencies located in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The mission of the laboratory is to provide accurate and timely analysis of these unknown substances and to provide Certificates of Analysis which are prima facie evidence in the courts of the Commonwealth.

2. Objective

The objective of this SOP is to establish guidelines to be used for samples submitted to the laboratory.

3. Scope

This SOP is to be used by the evidence office staff of the Division of Analytical Chemistry at William A. Hinton State Laboratory Institute in Boston, MA.

4. Responsibility

Evidence Officers are responsible for evidence handling, processing of evidence, maintaining chain of custody and data entry. They are also responsible for case assignment and will also prepare Certificate of Analysis.

Laboratory Supervisors ensure that evidence officers are following this SOP. They may perform the duties of the evidence officer. They ensure that quality control measures are within acceptable limits

and determine when corrective actions are needed. They coordinate proficiency testing (PT), reporting and distribution of PT results. They oversee sample results distribution to outside agencies.

Directors ensure that the SOP is being followed and reviewed on a regular basis. They provide approval of standard operating procedures and review quality control documentations.

5. Related Documents

N/A

6. Definitions

Case: All samples submitted at the same time for one or more defendants.

7. Supplies & Equipment

Drug Receipt
Evidence Envelope
Control Card
Analytical Balance

8. Safety

Due to the potential hazards, appropriate precautions should be taken as necessary. This includes, but is not limited to, the use of gloves, lab coats and safety glasses.

9. Procedure

A. Routine Samples

i. Cases are submitted to the Drug Laboratory either through certified mail or by direct submission.
ii. An evidence envelope must be filled out by the submitting agent/officer for all samples submitted. The following sections should be completed: city, and defendant's name (if known).
iii. A drug receipt must be filled out by the submitting agent/officer for all samples submitted. The following sections should be completed: city/department, came and rank of submitting officer, defendant's name/s (if known), and description of items submitted.
iv. The evidence officer will fill out the submitting agency Log Book. The following information should be documented: date, name of submitting officer, city/department, and range of lab#/s used.
v. All sample/s should be parceled in separate plastic bags before being submitted to the evidence officer.
vi. The submitting officer will give the evidence officer the evidence envelope, drug receipt and the sample/s for each case.
vii. The evidence officer will fill out the date received and the category of the suspected sample. They will also verify that the evidence envelope is filled out accurately.
    1. Saliva-, blood-, or feces- contaminated evidence should be indicated with a biohazard label affixed on the outside of the evidence envelope. If possible, indicate where on the body the evidence was retrieved.

2. If glass or broken glass is submitted, it must be properly packaged before placing into the evidence bag. A biohazard label and indication of glass must be made clear.
3. If a syringe is submitted, it must be placed n a rigid, shatterproof container before placing in the evidence envelope. A biohazard label and indication of syringe must be made clear. It is the laboratory policy to **NOT** routinely test the contents of syringes, though special circumstances may warrant it after a consultation with the Lab Supervisor.

viii. The evidence officer will verify that the sample/s is sealed and initialed.
ix. All samples should be inventoried and compared with the documentation on the drug receipt. The evidence officer will verify the accuracy of the drug receipt.
x. The evidence officer will obtain and document onto the drug receipt the evidence gross weight and assign a laboratory number for each sample.
xi. The evidence officer will initial and date the completed drug receipt. The lab will retain the white (top) copy of the drug receipt and the yellow (bottom) copy will be give to the submitting agent/officer.
xii. The evidence officer will affix the corresponding bar code label to the appropriate evidence envelope.
xiii. The evidence officer will place the sample/s into the evidence envelope with the corresponding laboratory number/s.
xiv. The evidence officer will log the case information into the database. Then a control card for each laboratory number is generated which contains the pertinent information from the drug receipt.
xv. The control card is placed into the corresponding evidence envelope.
xvi. The evidence envelope is placed into the evidence office safe until the sample/s are randomly assigned to a chemist for analysis.
xvii. All discrepancies should be reported to the Laboratory Supervisor.

B. Re-submittal Samples

i. Cases can be resubmitted to the lab for independent weighing or analysis, additional or full chemical analysis and re-packaging. These cases will undergo a similar process as above for sample submission.
ii. The District Attorney's office will need to provide a letter indicating the laboratory number/s that is being resubmitted and its reasons.
iii. A drug receipt must be filled out by the submitting agent/officer for all samples submitted. The following sections should be completed: city/department, came and rank of submitting officer, defendant's name/s (if known), and description of items submitted.
iv. The evidence officer will fill out the submitting agency Re-submittal Log Book. The following information should be documented: date, name of submitting officer, city/department, and range of lab#/s used.
v. The submitting officer will give the evidence officer the evidence envelope, drug receipt and the sample/s for each case.
vi. The evidence officer will verify that the evidence envelope contains the appropriate bar code label and that the sample/s is sealed and initialed.
vii. All samples should be inventoried and compared with the documentation on the drug receipt. The evidence officer will verify the accuracy of the drug receipt.

viii. The evidence officer will obtain and document onto the drug receipt the evidence gross weight and assign a letter to the laboratory number for each sample. The letter/s (R, RR or W) indicates that the sample was resubmitted to the lab.
ix. The evidence officer will initial and date the completed drug receipt. The lab will retain the white (top) copy of the drug receipt and the yellow (bottom) copy will be give to the submitting agent/officer.
x. The evidence officer will place the sample/s into the evidence envelope with the corresponding laboratory number/s.
xi. The evidence officer will log the case information into the database. Then a control card for each laboratory number is generated which contains the pertinent information from the drug receipt.
xii. The control card is placed into the corresponding evidence envelope.
xiii. The evidence envelope is placed into the evidence office safe until the sample/s is assigned to a chemist for analysis.
xiv. All discrepancies should be reported to the Laboratory Supervisor.

10. Attachments

A. Evidence Envelope
B. Drug Receipt
C. Control Card

Attachment

Evidence Envelope

{ DATE \@ "M/d/yyyy" }

Attachment

Drug Receipt

{ DATE \@ "M/d/yyyy" }

Attachment

Control Card

{ DATE \@ "M/d/yyyy" }